

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A sewing method, for closing an axial end of a tubular article, comprising the steps of:
  - flattening an end of the article to be sewn by moving close to each other
  - 5 two opposite flaps of said end of the article;
  - inserting said end of the article between two mutually facing laminas that form a passage constituting at least an initial part of a guiding path for said end of the article, so that the article protrudes with a portion of said end from a side of said pair of laminas;
  - 10 -- producing advancement of the article along said guiding path;
  - performing a first sewing of said end by way of a sewing head arranged proximate to said guiding path while the article advances along said guiding path;
  - disengaging the sewing head from the article and retracting the article along said guiding path until the article returns upstream of the sewing head;
  - 15 -- again producing advancement of the article along said guiding path;
  - performing a second sewing of said end of the article by way of the same sewing head, while the article advances along said guiding path;
  - 20 -- disengaging the article from the sewing head.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein during said second sewing step a second stitched seam is formed along a line that is spaced with respect to a line of a first stitched seam formed during the first sewing step.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein said first and second stitched seams are formed with overcast stitches.
- 25 4. The method of claim 3, wherein stitches of a chain of said first stitched seam are tighter than stitches of a chain of said second stitched seam.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein at an end of the first stitched seam and/or at an end of the second stitched seam, the chain of stitches is cut.

6. A sewing apparatus for closing an axial end of a tubular article, comprising: two mutually facing laminas that form a passage therebetween, said passage constituting at least an initial part of a guiding path and being adapted to receive a region of the article that is proximate to an end thereof  
5 to be sewn; at least one sewing head that faces a side of a plane of arrangement of said pair of laminas from which a portion of the end of the article to be sewn has to protrude; moving means for moving the article along said guiding path in two mutually opposite directions of motion in order to make the article advance with respect to the sewing head during  
10 formation of a first stitched seam, in order to make the article retract to a position upstream of the sewing head after forming the first stitched seam and make the article advance again during formation of a second stitched seam.

7. The apparatus of claim 6, comprising distance variation means for  
15 varying a distance of said sewing head from the plane of arrangement of said pair of laminas in order to vary position of a sewing line on the article.

8. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said pair of laminas is arranged on a substantially horizontal plane in order to receive the article with the end thereof to be closed that protrudes upward from said laminas, said sewing  
20 head facing, in an upward region, the plane of arrangement of said laminas and being movable on command by action of said distance variation means along a direction that has a vertical component in order to be arranged at at least two different sewing levels.

9. The apparatus of claim 6, comprising, upstream of said sewing head  
25 along the advancement direction of the article during sewing, a trimming cutter for removing an excess part of said portion of the end of the article that protrudes upward from said laminas.

10. The apparatus of claim 8, further comprising a first motor for actuation of said sewing head and a second motor for the actuation of said  
30 moving means for moving the article with actuation speeds that are

variable in order to vary tightness of the stitches.

11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said sewing head is a sewing head with a curved needle and a crochet adapted to perform overcast stitching.

5       12. The apparatus of claim 11, comprising a hook mechanism that is movable on command in order to vary width of the chain-stitches.

13. The apparatus of claim 8, comprising positioning means, provided above said laminas, for engaging said end of the article and move upward in order to apply to the article a tension that is orientated upward so as to 10 place a beginning of the region of the article that is thicker against said contact surface, said laminas forming, with lower faces thereof, a contact surface for a region of the article that is proximate to the end to be closed and is thicker than a region of the article that is inserted between said laminas.

15       14. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein said moving means comprise claws, which are arranged on a side of said laminas that lies opposite the side said sewing head faces for engaging the two opposite sides of the article in a region of the article that is proximate to said laminas, said claws being movable on command along a direction that is parallel to an 20 extension of said passage.